



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

**The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management**
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Winter weather finally arrived in New Hampshire in mid-December following a long stretch of late fall sunshine. Officials of the N.H. Department of Transportation and the State Police met Dec. 6 at DOT headquarters in Concord to discuss the Winter Safe Commute Strategic Plan, winter safety messages, advisory speed limits and updates of available technology from the Transportation Management Center. Transportation Commissioner Christopher Clement is fourth from the left in the front row.

N.H. DOT photo

STATE RECEIVES FIVE-COUNTY DISASTER DECLARATION – New Hampshire will receive federal assistance for damages related to Hurricane Sandy. President Obama granted Gov. John Lynch's request for a Major Disaster Declaration to cover infrastructure repair, emergency protective measures, emergency response costs and the cost of debris removal for Belknap, Carroll, Coös, Grafton and Sullivan counties. The state had previously received an Emergency Declaration to cover the costs of emergency protective measures for Cheshire, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham and Strafford counties. Gov. Lynch had requested assistance for debris removal for the five southern counties, but that request was not granted. All 10 New Hampshire counties are eligible for Hazard Mitigation funds, which will help cover the cost of projects intended to reduce future disaster damage.

Federal assistance for disaster aid programs covers 75 percent of eligible costs. The state and local jurisdictions are responsible for the remaining 25 percent.

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS PROMPT SAFETY CONCERNS – The tragic school shootings in Newtown, Conn., on Dec. 14 have prompted questions from parents, teachers and school officials about school safety in New Hampshire. No security measures can guaranty absolute safety, but New Hampshire schools do have many safety measures already in place. Public and private schools in the state are required to have all-hazard emergency plans. Those plans must be updated annually and exercised twice a year. In the past year HSEM has assisted with 53 training activities for schools with grades K-12 and 38 training programs for childcare facilities.

On Dec. 15, HSEM, the N.H. Department of Education and other state agencies hosted a conference call for school superintendents to discuss school security. In addition, many local police departments have stepped up patrols around school facilities.

POPE TO STEP DOWN AS HSEM DIRECTOR – Christopher M. Pope, New Hampshire's first director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, will leave that position on Jan. 3. Pope was appointed to the position by Gov. John H. Lynch in August 2006. During his tenure the state experienced 12 federally declared disasters and HSEM moved from Johnson Hall in the South Office Park to its current home in the Incident Planning and Operations Center on the grounds of the state Fire Academy. Gov. Lynch and Safety Commissioner John J. Barthelmes credited Pope with strong leadership during a series of natural disasters that affected the state on his watch. Gov.-elect Maggie Hassan will appoint a new director, who must be confirmed by the Executive Council.

HSEM ADDS FACEBOOK PAGE AND TWITTER FEED – With social media becoming increasingly important in communicating with the public, HSEM has added a Facebook page and Twitter account to strengthen its outreach effort. The intent of these accounts is to share situational awareness and preparedness information with our partners and the general public on an on-going basis as well as when the State Emergency Operations Center is activated. They can be found at the following links:

Facebook – <http://www.facebook.com/NH.HSEM>

Twitter - https://twitter.com/NH_HSEM

We encourage you to 'like', 'follow' and 'share' the HSEM accounts with your partners and followers. These accounts are not monitored 24/7/365 and are not intended to report emergencies.

POWER GRID REPORTS ADEQUATE WINTER RESOURCES – The operator of the regional electric power grid says it has adequate resources to keep New England supplied with electricity this winter. But ISO New England officials also voiced concern about the region's dependence on natural gas to run power plants. ISO-New England has total supplies of about 33,000 megawatts (MW) from generators and other resources. Peak demand at temperatures of 7 degrees Fahrenheit is estimated at 22,355 MW this winter. Peak demand at 2 degrees F. could top 23,000 MW. During the 2011-2012 winter season demand for electricity peaked at 21,354 MW on January 4, 2012. The all-time winter peak of 22,818 MW was set on January 15, 2004, during a cold snap.

ISO-New England officials noted that about 45 percent of the region's generating capacity comes from natural gas-fired plants. The low price of natural gas in recent years has led to increased reliance on the fuel. But natural gas demand increases sharply in the winter months because of its use as a heating fuel. ISO-New England officials say they will continue to monitor natural gas supplies and coordinate with suppliers to ensure an adequate supply. They also plan to ensure that coal, oil and LNG supplies are available in the region.

SEABROOK SIREN DEMONSTRATION SUCCESSFUL – The audible demonstration Dec. 5 of emergency sirens for the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant was successful. All 121 sirens were fully operational and there were only two minor technical problems detected in a post-demonstration electronic polling of the system. Those problems, at individual sirens in Portsmouth and Salisbury, Mass., were immediately corrected by technicians. The demonstration was preceded by a public information campaign to ensure that the public knew that no real emergency was taking place. New Hampshire's 911 call centers received 10 calls about the siren activation and the Rockingham County Dispatch Center received five such calls. Emergency dispatch centers in Massachusetts received 41 calls. This was the fifth consecutive year that a demonstration of the system was conducted.

SBA ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR N.H. NON-PROFITS – The U.S. Small Business Administration is making low-interest loans available to private, non-profit organizations in five New Hampshire counties that suffered damage during Hurricane Sandy. The five counties are: Belknap, Carroll, Coös, Grafton and Sullivan. Organizations such as food kitchens, homeless shelters, museums, schools and colleges are eligible for loans as low as 3 percent for up to 30 years. The deadline for applications for physical damage is Jan. 28, 2012. The deadline for economic injury is Aug. 28, 2013. For more information or to download application forms go to www.sba.gov.

FIREFIGHTERS TAKE SURVIVAL TRAINING – One-hundred-twenty New Hampshire firefighters took a three-day course at the N.H. Fire Academy in December aimed at reducing fatalities while battling fires. "Fireground Survival Training" is a program developed by the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF). It applies lessons from firefighter fatality investigations conducted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and was developed by subject matter experts from the IAFF, NIOSH and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. The program was conducted Dec. 11-13 and Dec. 17-19. Attendees represented 28 New Hampshire fire departments.

*Happy Holidays from N.H. Homeland Security
and Emergency Management*

Keep up with emergency preparedness information in New Hampshire on www.readynh.nh.gov and [Twitter.com/ReadyNH](https://twitter.com/ReadyNH). For information on upcoming training and classes go to: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/fstems/training/schedtrdates.html>